

# **Mountain Vistas Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report**

## **Executive Summary**

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**Prepared by:**

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# **MOUNTAIN VISTAS SPECIFIC PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

## **LIST OF PREPARERS**

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## **PROJECT PROPONENTS**

### **APPLICANTS**

D. Anthony Mize, Workforce Homebuilders LLC/WF Fund II LLC  
Kathryn A. Brown, Property Owner



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The overall objective of the proposed project is to provide additional development opportunities in Chalfant in a manner that enhances community life and which implements existing General Plan goals, objectives, and policies for the area. Specific project objectives include:

- Increasing the amount of single-family housing in Chalfant in an area adjacent to the existing community in order to minimize impacts to surrounding agricultural lands and public lands.
- Providing additional infill development between the existing developed areas east and west of U.S. Highway 6 in order to create a more cohesive community.
- Providing an additional site for small-scale commercial development to serve local needs.
- Creating a core commercial area in Chalfant along Hwy. 6 in the immediate vicinity of Brown's Subdivision Road and Chalfant Road.
- Increasing residential density in order to permit the efficient delivery of services such as fire protection, to allow for easier pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the community, and to create a sufficient population base to help support a local school.
- Providing additional infill development along, at a greater single-family density, in order to help develop a "Main Street" along Hwy. 6 through the community of Chalfant.

The project applicants intend to provide 47 single-family residences, along with a site for small-scale commercial development and all required infrastructure and utilities for the proposed development, on a parcel located at the northwest corner of Hwy. 6 and Chalfant Road in Chalfant.

## PROJECT COMPONENTS

The proposed development for the Mountain Vistas Specific Plan includes the following components:

1. Subdivision of a 28.95-acre parcel (APN 26-210-37) into forty-seven (47) single-family residential lots (gross density of 0.5 acres), one (1) commercial lot (approximately 2 acres), and six utility and open space lots to be used for wells, water storage, propane storage, stormwater retention, a park area and landscaping. Tract Map Application 37-54 addresses the subdivision of the property.
2. Designation of the project site as Specific Plan (SP), including Single-Family Residential (SFR) with a half-acre gross density and a minimum lot size of 0.43 acres, Commercial (C), Utility (U), and Open Space (OS). Ten (10) lots along the western edge of the project also have an Equestrian overlay (E) designation. An application for a General Plan Amendment (GPA #03-02) addresses the redesignation of the parcel from Estate Residential (ER) to the Specific Plan land use designations.

3. Development of required infrastructure on-site, including paved two-lane roads, a domestic and fire protection water system (wells, water distribution and storage system, fire hydrants), a propane tank yard and propane distribution system, a storm drainage system, an underground electrical, telephone, and cable TV distribution system, and individual septic systems for all lots. On-site infrastructure improvements will be developed in phases by Workforce Homebuilders LLC.
4. The commercial lot would be developed by the current property owner. The residential lots would be developed by Workforce Homebuilders LLC in two consecutive phases. Workforce Homebuilders LLC intends to install factory-built housing assembled on site on an engineered load-bearing foundation system. They intend to provide three floor plans and two exterior elevations per floor plan. Housing materials and colors are intended to blend aesthetically into the surrounding environment. Development of the site would include a landscaping buffer between Hwy. 6 and the project and additional landscaping throughout the project site.
5. The project will be privately funded.

## LOCATION

The project site is a 28.95-acre parcel located in the southeast corner of Mono County, California, approximately 13 miles north of Bishop, California (see Figure 1, Regional Map and Vicinity Map in Appendix A, Map Set). The site is located in the community of Chalfant in the Tri-Valley, adjacent to the northwest corner of the intersection of Hwy. 6 and Chalfant Road.

The parcel is located in the E 1/2 NE 1/4 Sec. 8, T.5S, R.33E, M.D.B.M. on the U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle map "Chidago Canyon." The Mono County Assessor's Parcel Number is 26-210-37. The Mono County Land Use Maps showing the parcel are Figure 96, Chalfant Valley Area, and Figure 97, Chalfant Community North.

## RANGE OF ISSUES

The range of issues identified for the proposed project includes the following:

1. The General Plan designation for the parcel is Estate Residential (ER), which has a one (1) acre minimum lot size (Mono County Land Use Maps, Figure 97--Chalfant Community North). The Mono County Land Use Element also states that "gross densities for residential development in Chalfant shall not exceed one (1) dwelling unit per acre. For parcels ten (10) acres or greater, clustering shall be encouraged" (Mono County Land Use Element, Tri-Valley policies, Objective C, Action 2.1). The gross density for the proposed single-family residences is one (1) dwelling unit per half-acre. The proposed change in lot size and density requires a General Plan Amendment.
2. There are numerous issues relating to water; i.e.,
  - water consumption by the project;
  - impacts on existing wells and the surrounding water table;

- water pressure/fireflow issues;
  - septic system impacts on water quality; and
  - potential cumulative water quantity and quality impacts in the area.
3. There are potential flooding and storm drainage issues in the project area.
  4. Forty-seven additional residences and one additional commercial lot would create traffic impacts on Hwy. 6 and on Chalfant Road.
  5. Since the proposed project is adjacent to Hwy. 6, there could be noise impacts to the project from the traffic on the highway, particularly from the truck traffic. Construction-related noise impacts could also be an issue.
  6. There are aesthetic issues related to the rural character of the area; i.e.,
    - the project should "preserve the rural character and setting of Chalfant" (Mono County Land Use Element, Tri-Valley policies, Objective B, Policy 2); and
    - the "look" of the development should remain rural (development layout, building styles and noise attenuation wall).
  7. The proposed project site is in an area identified in the Mono County Master Environmental Assessment (MEA Figure 18 F) as being subject to wind erosion. This would be a concern both during the construction/development process and on an ongoing basis.
  8. Forty-seven additional residences and one additional commercial lot, and the resulting increase in population, could create impacts to public services (transfer station, schools, phone lines, mail) and emergency services (paramedic, fire protection, sheriff) in the area.

## **SUMMARY OF PREPARATION PROCESS**

The Mountain Vistas Specific Plan and EIR was prepared by a consultant utilizing comments from a public scoping meeting held in Chalfant on Nov. 5, 2003, review of related technical literature and data, evaluation of the project plan documents, review of local plans and policies including the Mono County General Plan and Land Development Regulations, consultation with interested agencies and individuals, and incorporation of special studies prepared for the Specific Plan (traffic, noise, hydrogeology, flooding). An administrative draft was reviewed by Mono County staff and revised by the consultant.

## **SPECIFIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING**

Policies in the Specific Plan will be implemented through the design and conservation standards established in the plan. Those standards incorporate suggested mitigation measures from the special studies (traffic, noise, hydrogeology, flooding) prepared for the project as well as mitigation from the county's General Plan and Land Development Regulations. The design and conservation standards also incorporate proposed mitigation measures resulting from the analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Specific Plan. Implementation of the

portions of the Specific Plan will also be achieved through the tract map process and conditions of approval for the tract map. Implementation and monitoring of the Specific Plan are outlined in detail in Chapter VII, Specific Plan Enforcement.

## **SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The DEIR identifies two potentially significant unavoidable environmental effects of the project that cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level; mitigation measures proposed in the DEIR will reduce these impacts to the lowest feasible levels.

1. Visual Resources; and
2. Hazards—flooding.

The DEIR identifies seven potentially significant environmental effects of the project that, with mitigation, can be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

1. Public Service Impacts (schools, police, fire, emergency medical services, recreation);
2. Geology/Soils Impacts;
3. Circulation Impacts (turn volume increases and safety concerns);
4. Noise Impacts;
5. Air Quality Impacts;
6. Water Resource Impacts; and
7. Hazards—fire.

All other impact areas are not potentially significant; mitigation measures are proposed in the DEIR for several of these impact areas to reduce impacts to even lower levels.

## **SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

The project would result in the conversion of 29 acres of previously disturbed sagebrush scrub to housing, roads and small-scale commercial development. The project would utilize on-site septic systems and wells. Once the site is developed with residential uses it is unlikely that those uses would change. The site has been used in the past for agriculture; it is unlikely that the housing would be removed in the future so that the site could be used again for agriculture.

This change is not significant, however, because the site is designated for residential uses in the Mono County General Plan, it is adjacent to existing residential and commercial development in Chalfant, and is adjacent to existing, paved roads (Hwy. 6, Chalfant Road). It is not adjacent to other parcels designated for agriculture.

## **GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS**

Chalfant is primarily a residential community with extremely limited commercial and agricultural facilities and no industrial or manufacturing sites. As data from the 2000 Census indicate, most workers in Chalfant commute to jobs outside Chalfant, primarily in Bishop and



Mammoth Lakes. Although the project is anticipated to create some jobs, both during the construction phases of the project and over the life of the project, the number of jobs is anticipated to be small, and it is anticipated that most jobs will be taken by current residents of the area.

## **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

The EIR identifies three environmental effects that may be cumulatively considerable as the result of planned projects in the Chalfant area, including the proposed project:

1. Public services (emergency medical, law enforcement, schools, fire);
2. Geology/Soils (erosion); and
3. Visual resource impacts.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The project analyzes six alternatives to the proposed project:

1. No Project Alternative. The project site would remain in its current condition.
2. Reduced Development: 26 residences on one-acre lots. No commercial development.
3. Reduced Development: 18 residences on one-acre lots. No commercial development.
4. Reduced Development: 34 residences on one-half acre lots. One commercial lot. Park space.
5. Clustered Development: 48 residences on one-quarter acre lots. One commercial lot. Approximately half the current lot would be park space.
6. Alternative Access: 49 residences on lots ranging from 0.31 acres to 0.6 acres. One commercial lot. Chalfant Road from Hwy. 6 to the western portion of the project site would be abandoned, and access to Hwy. 6 would be provided through the project site.

The alternatives reduce the identified impacts to varying degrees.



